

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended): A computer system for peer-to-peer file sharing comprising:
 - a server computer having an index of information about files that reside on a plurality of peer computers, the server computer selectively coupled to the plurality of peer computers by a network;
 - a plurality of agent programs running on at least two of the plurality of peer computers and operable to transmit index information to the server computer and operable to transmit a requested file; and
 - a file sharing program running on the server computer and operable to perform centralized searches based on the index information transmitted to it across the network by the agent programs, to store peer computer file requests identifying a requested file transmitted across the network by a requesting peer computer of the plurality of peer computers, the requested file being referenced in the index information, and to direct a peer-to-peer computer connection for the purpose of exchanging files between the requesting peer computer and a storing peer computer storing the requested file upon ~~a peer computer file request~~ detection of connection of the storing peer computer to the server.
2. (Currently Amended): The computer system of claim 1, wherein the server computer is also a peer computer.
3. (Currently Amended): The computer system of claim 1, wherein the contents of at least some of the files stored on a peer computer comprise nontextual data having meta data that comprises one or more vectors extracted from the files.

4. (Currently Amended): The computer system of claim 1, wherein each agent program creates the index information for selected files on each corresponding peer computer, the selected files selected by user input.

5. (Currently Amended): The computer system of claim 1, wherein each agent program creates the index information for selected files on each corresponding peer computer, the selected files selected by a computer algorithm.

6. (Currently Amended): The computer system of claim 1, wherein the agent program comprises a utility program that is resident in an operating system on the corresponding peer computer.

7. (Currently Amended): The computer system of claim 1, wherein the file sharing program comprises a utility program that is resident in an operating system on the corresponding server computer.

8. (New): The computer system of claim 1, wherein the file sharing program is further operable to direct transfer of the requested file from the storing peer computer to the server upon detection of connection of the storing computer to the server when the requesting peer computer is not connected to the server, the file sharing program operable to transmit the requested file from the server to the requesting peer computer upon detection of connection of the requesting peer computer to the server.